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HISTORICAL DATA

CHIEFLY RELATING TO

SOUTH LANCASHIRE

AND THE

COTTON MANUFACTURE.

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IN THE DEPARTMENT, "ECONOMY AND TRADE," AT THE MEETING OF THE
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BY

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III

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UPON an occasion like the present, when many of our countrymen are assembled, from various parts of the kingdom, to promote measures calculated to advance the material and social welfare of the people, no subject seems more appropriately to claim our attention than a consideration of the various agencies which have produced the marked progress everywhere exhibited in this great centre of manufacturing industry.

We cannot look back to the early history of our county, in contrast especially to the present condition of South Lancashire, without being impressed by the wonderful achievements of its population.

It will not, in this inquiry, be necessary for us to dwell upon the records of Roman, Saxon, or Danish occupation. We may well assume that our early predecessors led a primitive sort of life in forest homes, being dependent for subsistence upon the precarious supplies of the chase :

Rude as the wilds around his sylvan home,
In savage grandeur see the Briton roam ;
Bare were his limbs, and strung with toil and cold,
By untamed nature, cast in giant mould.

Referring to the early records of this particular district, we find that when the Norman Conqueror, William, had laid waste the country from York to Durham, and was proceeding to winter his army at his fortress in Chester, he viewed from

the Yorkshire hills, with dreadful apprehension, the forest and morass lying before him in South Lancashire. He found the whole of the country without roads and almost uninhabited; the woods appeared impenetrable—there were valleys flooded with water—deep rivers but no bridges. His army, therefore, had to encounter fearful obstructions; his soldiers murmured and threatened to return to the continent, and the king was obliged to cheer his men by personally aiding them in their difficulties and dangers.

A survey of the kingdom was made by his direction in the year 1086, which has been called the "Doomsday Survey;" but the commissioners employed upon it found little to survey in that part of Lancashire which is now denominated the Hundred of Salford. They reported that the whole manor of Salford rendered £37. 4s. The names of the places given are Salford, Radcliffe, Manchester, and Rochdale. The expression "wasta," or waste, is constantly occurring. They describe the extent in miles, of the large forests in which the roe abounded. They met with oxen, but no reference is made to horses, asses, cows, sheep, pigs, or dogs.

For a long period subsequent to this survey we have but scanty records of the progress of the British people. In the fourteenth century, the eastern towns of the kingdom appear to have been the most prosperous, none of the western, excepting Bristol, being named as important. Colchester is described as having had a considerable trade with France and the Netherlands. Throughout the country there was a small body of wealthy barons and prelates; below these were landed proprietors, freeholders, and burgesses; next, tenants in villenage, who were burdened with fines and services; and, lastly, cottagers serving as ploughmen, carters, cowherds, and shepherds, who received, in lieu of wages, allowances of produce for their subsistence, and who dwelt in small huts formed of wattles and mud, having only one room each, which was "unpaved, unglazed, and unclean."

Vegetable food was almost unknown; whilst for half the year the people lived on salted meat; hence the prevalence of scurvy and other diseases.

The resources of the nation and the local distribution of wealth are denoted chiefly by the records of subsidies in the rolls of parliament. In 1341 a subsidy of 30,000 sacks of wool was ordered to be rateably assessed upon counties and towns, or £4 per sack paid in lieu thereof; and it appears that nearly the whole of the wealth of England was then in the southern districts, since the contributions from Lancashire and West Yorkshire were exceedingly small, as compared with the rest.

Of the general condition of the inhabitants we shall say but little. Intestine troubles and the marauding habits of the people were such as could only be attributed to a class of freebooters, who acknowledged—

The good old law, the ancient plan,
That they should get who have the power,
And they should keep who can.

Such a condition of the country prevented anything like social or economical progress.

In the year 1607 the survey of Camden was made; and it is deserving of remark that, on the approach of the great historian to South Lancashire, his cogitations terminated in a quaint soliloquy, which evidently denoted the state of the district at this period. Having completed his survey of Yorkshire, he proceeded to describe Lancashire as “the country lying beyond the mountains towards the western ocean.” And, regarding the district before him as being scarcely civilised, he says: “And first of the people of Lancashire, whom I approach with a kind of dread; may it forebode no ill. . . . However, that I may not seem wanting, I will run the hazard of the attempt, hoping that the Divine assistance which hath favoured me in the rest will not fail me in this.” Several towns then existing are described, namely, Rochdale, Bury, and Manchester; the latter “surpassing the rest in populousness, and having a woollen manufacture, market-place, and church.” “Litherpoole,” shortened into “Lirpool,” is described as “the usual place for setting sail to Ireland.”

The towns of Ashton, Bolton, Oldham, Salford, and many other places, some of which now contain from thirty thousand to one hundred thousand inhabitants, are not even named by him as then existing.

In the proceedings of the Courts Leet of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries there are records indicating the social condition of the town of Manchester, which would now appear somewhat amusing. The Earl of Derby was steward of the manor, and in his authority he was supported by important functionaries, described respectively as "The Boroughreeve," "The Constables," "The Dog Muzzler," "The Ale Taster," "The Scavenger," "The Swiner," and "The Pinder."

The extracts from these records, recently published by the Chetham Society, present some curious illustrations of the habits, occupations, comforts, enjoyments, and annoyances of our ancestors.

It was not very long after this period, however, that Manchester became a seat of manufacture. So far back as 1641 flax was imported from Ireland, which was returned to that country in a manufactured state, just as Manchester now imports raw cotton from America and other countries, and sends it back to them made up into calicoes, muslins, and other fabrics. But in these early days it was only through the metropolis that the raw materials could be procured; since Liverpool was then but "a fishing place with 138 dwellings, and with only ten barks, navigated by twenty-five mariners."

About the time of the Revolution the spirit of enterprise set in with vigour, and the channels of commerce began to widen.

In 1691 Sir Dudley North enunciated some ideas of political economy; and at the close of the century the annual exports of the kingdom had reached the sum of £6,709,881. As commerce increased capital became more abundant, so that the ordinary rate of interest, which had ranged from eight to ten per cent, came down to five per cent. But what was still more important the principles of productive industry were being rapidly developed, and the various processes of manufacture in operation were being improved and extended. The most important branch of British industry at that time was the woollen manufacture, though the art of dyeing was not well understood, and the goods were mostly exported in an unfinished state. The manufacture of linens also was carried on as a domestic employment. Silk had to a small extent attracted the attention of manufac-

turers ; and in Manchester and the surrounding towns “union cloth,” composed of linen warp and cotton weft, was manufactured to a considerable extent. So large in fact was the demand for such goods, that the weavers were greatly perplexed how to provide the requisite supply of them. The great want was a sufficient quantity of cotton weft, since one weaver required as much weft as three spinsters could spin. But this state of things aroused a spirit of inquiry ; and in the year 1738 an important discovery was announced by John Wyatt, of Birmingham, for spinning thread without the intervention of human fingers. The machine itself, which has never been minutely described, was wrought by two asses walking round an axis, the other operations being conducted by ten or twelve girls. It failed, however, to supersede the distaff and spindle, then in household use, so that popular impatience was manifested, and it was evident on every hand that a period of stern necessity had been reached, when improved appliances must be resorted to. In Lancashire, moreover, a considerable start had been already given to material progress, which became apparent in other directions. The highways and turnpike roads of the country had been improved and extended ; the navigation of the Mersey and Irwell, and of the canal of the Duke of Bridgewater were being developed ; coal mines were being extensively opened, and new facilities for mercantile traffic were being provided.

In these improved provisions, the result of stern necessity, we see foreshadowed the dawn of our present commercial day. Yet the distaff and spindle—which, in all previous time had supplied the thread of woven fabrics—were still the sole reliance of the weaver, the source of domestic occupation, the honoured symbol of female industry, and doubtless the origin of the familiar term “*Spinster*,” which is still used in the publication of the marriage bans.

The year 1760 marked the beginning of a new era of commercial history, and introduced a century of progress the most wonderful that the world has ever known. In that year—the same in which George III. ascended the throne of these realms—the Society of Arts offered a premium for the greatest improvement in the common spinning wheel, and eventually

they awarded a small sum for a meritorious contrivance whereby a spinner could spin with both hands at the same time. In order still further to stimulate invention, the society's premium, which was originally of small amount, was increased to the sum of £100 for the construction of a machine that would spin six threads of wool, cotton, flax, or silk at the same time. An unsuccessful attempt was made to accomplish this then difficult operation, which received a gratuity of £25; but in the year 1766 the practicability of succeeding in such an invention was despaired of, and the society ceased to make any further offer.

The transactions of the society were not then published; but minutes of their proceedings were retained by Robert Dossie, who, speaking from his own observation and that of two other very judicious members of the society, made the following explanatory remarks relating to the invention of John Wyatt, which had been patented by Mr. Paul.

"The spinning machine of the late Mr. Paul carried this application of mechanics to the greatest extent it is perhaps capable of. By a very great expense, and the assistance of the most ingenious theoretic as well as practical mechanism of our time, he attained to the construction of a machine that, being moved by horses, water, or any other power, would spin, in the most perfect manner, any number of threads, without other assistance of the hands than to supply the carded cotton, take away the finished roll of thread, and rectify any accidental disorders of the operation. But the delicacy of the work of the machine was equal almost to that of clocks, which subjected it to be so easily disordered, and at the same time so expensive to be repaired; and the peculiar manner of carding, which was likewise very expensive, has occasioned this machine to be now wholly laid aside as unprofitable, after sixty or seventy thousand pounds have been spent in various attempts to establish its use."

One year after this disappointment, and when the efforts of the Society of Arts seemed to prove that further attempts were altogether hopeless, namely in the year 1767 without any stimulus or promise of royal favour or other pecuniary reward, James Hargreaves, of Blackburn, invented the well-known "Spinning Jenny," by which he could spin from 16 to 30 threads at once, and without the use of rollers.

In 1769, Richard Arkwright, of Bolton, patented a spinning machine, which he called the "Water Frame." This machine carried a great many spindles, and performed the operation of forming the thread by rollers.

And lastly, in 1775, a machine for attenuating and spinning the prepared cotton, which was a combination of the two discoveries of Hargreaves and Arkwright, was invented and made known by Samuel Crompton, of Hall-i'th-Wood, near Bolton, the hybrid character of its origin having caused it to be designated the "Mule." Some idea of the productive power, and practical value of this last invention, may be formed from the fact that whilst the "Water Frame" is capable of spinning a pound of cotton to the length of nineteen miles, or forty hanks; the "Mule" has not met with any limit short of 950 miles to the pound of cotton, or 2,000 hanks.

Although first applied to cotton, these inventions have since been most successfully extended to the spinning of the other staples of wool, flax, and silk, thereby greatly enlarging the operations of these several trades. The hosiery and lace manufacturers of Nottingham, Leicester, and Derby, having once obtained the command of an improved quality of machine-spun cotton at a cheaper rate, have since so improved their machinery and extended the range of their productions, that they have been enabled on the one hand to supply stockings at less than threepence per pair, and on the other to obtain as much as £200 for sixteen ounces of cotton manufactured into lace, combining in these manufactures an amount of annual returns of nearly thirteen millions sterling.

The manufacturers of Bradford, and other parts of Yorkshire, have applied strong cotton yarn as the warp to receive the admixture of weft of various other fibrous substances, such as wool, mohair, alpaca, and silk, thus enlarging the extent and increasing the variety of these fabrics, which in Bradford alone have now reached nearly twenty millions sterling of yearly value.

Startling as it may appear, discoveries of such importance, which had baffled the genius of all preceding times, have been disclosed to the world by a few untutored men from the ranks of labour. Thanks to them, the machines thus con-

structed have completely revolutionised the arts of spinning, and have put in motion an instrumentality and a system of manufacture whereby the various fibrous products of nature are utilised to the service of man ; fitted alike to minister to the refined taste of the wealthy, and to supply the more important and urgent needs of the poor.

For a considerable time, even after the introduction of the first great changes, the cotton manufacture continued to be a household occupation. The raw material, whilst under process of manufacture was conveyed from one family to another, to undergo the various operations of beating, carding, roving, and spinning, preparatory to weaving. Such a course of proceeding was tardy, and soon became wearisome. The demands of the market were urgent and rapidly increasing, and the tide of impatience was swelling. With a view therefore to economy of time and quickness of production, the idea was suggested of concentrating the various processes in large rooms ; and soon afterwards, under the pressure of increasing necessity, still more commodious factories were erected, in which every department of the manufacture could be arranged and brought under more complete control.

The concentration of all these operations under one roof, where they were subjected to the propelling power of the water-wheel or the steam-engine, gave a united and combined action to all the processes and arrangements of spinning, causing the whole to be carried on with the precision of clock-work. This led to the regulation of wages by the yard in length, or the pound in weight of finished work, and in this way the discipline and productive power of a factory determined the income of the operative with uniformity and certainty.

The attractions thus presented by a well-paid and regular employment brought a great number of persons from the surrounding country, and the population of the various districts where manufactures were carried on increased with great rapidity.

The extent and rapidity of this increase may be ascertained by comparing the population of Lancashire in 1801 and 1861 with that of England and Wales during the same period. And

from this table it will be seen that whilst the population of England and Wales increased in the sixty years 225 per cent, that of Lancashire increased as much as 360 per cent :—

Years.	England and Wales.				Lancashire.	
1801	-	-	8,892,536	-	-	673,486
1811	-	-	10,164,256	-	-	828,499
1821	-	-	12,000,236	-	-	1,052,948
1831	-	-	13,896,797	-	-	1,136,854
1841	-	-	15,914,148	-	-	1,667,054
1851	-	-	17,927,609	-	-	2,031,236
1861	-	-	20,066,224	-	-	2,428,744
Increase in 60 years	}	-	-	225 per cent.	-	- 360 per cent.

The most remarkable increase of population has taken place in Liverpool and Manchester. A hundred years ago Liverpool had 30,000, and Manchester 25,000 inhabitants ; but the decennial increase of the two places during the last sixty years has been unprecedented in any other towns in the kingdom. The following figures denote the respective progress of each :— Liverpool increase in sixty years, 539 per cent ; Manchester increase in sixty years, 484 per cent.

Liverpool.			Manchester and Salford.		
Years.	Population.		Years.	Population.	
1801	-	- 82,295	1801	-	- 94,876
1811	-	- 104,104	1811	-	- 115,874
1821	-	- 138,354	1821	-	- 161,763
1831	-	- 201,751	1831	-	- 237,832
1841	-	- 286,487	1841	-	- 311,269
1851	-	- 375,955	1851	-	- 401,321
1861	-	- 443,874	1861	-	- 460,018
Increase in 60 years, 539 per cent.			Increase in 60 years, 484 per cent.		

How much of this increase has been owing to the increase of manufactures may be seen by the marked disproportion which exists in the rate of increase of the population in the southern division, where manufactures and commerce prevail, as compared with the northern, or more rural parts of the county. In the northern hundreds of Lonsdale, Amounderness, and Leyland, although they are to a small extent engaged in manufacturing, the increase in the sixty years only reached 127 per cent, whilst in the three southern, or more commercial, hundreds of Blackburn, Salford, and West Derby, the increase in the corresponding period has been 288 per cent.

Returning to the subject of the cotton manufacture, and the changes thereby effected, we have already remarked that in the manufacture of "union cloth" linen thread was used to form the warp for weaving. It was soon discovered, however, that the cotton fibre spun by machinery was quite strong enough, and that the cloth thus produced wholly of cotton was preferred by the consumer. It is this continued preference for cotton over linen and other fabrics which has led to the marvellous extension of the cotton manufacture in the short period of its existence.

As a measure of progress, it is a striking fact that whilst in the year 1760, according to Dr. Percival, the entire cotton trade of Great Britain did not return for materials and labour more than £200,000, in 1860 the returns of our cotton manufacture were estimated by Mr. Bazley, M.P., at the sum of £85,000,000; and that whilst in 1764 the weight of raw cotton imported was 3,870,000 lb.; in 1860 the weight of raw cotton consumed in this country was 1,083,600,000 lb. The figures we have quoted above show that we have, in this brief period, increased by more than 400 times the value of the cotton products, and that we are consuming in the operation 270 times as much weight of raw cotton as was consumed a century ago. They also confirm the fact that, owing to the comfort and cheapness obtained by cotton for clothing and other purposes, these fabrics have become the most popular among the masses of the people in all countries. And lastly, they denote the prodigious increase of cotton cultivation, whereby the planters, who produce this raw material in the United States and elsewhere have become possessed of a most lucrative industry.

By way of illustration of the extent and perfection attained in the cotton manufacture, it has been stated that in this country we employ as many as thirty-six millions of spindles, and that in one minute we can spin a length of cotton yarn which would wind four times round the earth. Every day ten millions of yards of cotton fabrics come out of our looms; and it seems to baffle our power of calculation when we say, that after having supplied the wants of our own population most abundantly, we have one hundred millions of pounds of yarn and two thousand millions

of 174 years, the property in the county of Lancaster usually denominated freehold, has increased in value by upwards of 11,600 per cent.

In 1692 the gross annual value of Lancashire was	-	-	-	£97,242
In 1815	"	"	"	3,087,774
In 1865	"	has been placed at	-	11,453,851
Or 11,600 per cent.				

As in the case of population, there has been, however, a marked distinction in the extent of material progress betwixt the northern and southern, or the agricultural and the manufacturing divisions of the county. In the Hundreds chiefly agricultural, the increase in value has been at the rate of 4,776 per cent; whilst in the Hundreds chiefly commercial and manufacturing, the increase has been in the ratio of 13,991 per cent. The following figures exhibit the valuations of both in 1692 and 1865 :—

AGRICULTURAL (CHIEFLY).

		Value in 1692.	Value in 1865.	Increase of Value.
The Hundred of Lonsdale	-	£8,500	£423,665	
"	Amounderness	10,288	525,239	
"	Leyland	5,774	248,795	
		<u>£24,562</u>	<u>£1,197,699</u>	or 4,776 per cent.

MANUFACTURING AND COMMERCIAL (CHIEFLY).

		Value in 1692.	Value in 1865.	Increase of Value.
The Hundred of Blackburn	-	£1,131	£950,663	
"	Salford	25,907	4,082,799	
"	West Derby	35,642	3,798,806	
		<u>£62,680</u>	<u>£8,832,268</u>	or 13,991 per cent.

It thus appears that the balance of progress is nearly three to one in favour of the district which is mostly engaged in manufactures and commerce; but it will be observed that the mighty change effected by commerce alone is manifested to a much more remarkable extent by reference to the receipts of shipping dues in the port of Liverpool, which have increased in 106 years 30,662 per cent.

In the year 1760, only a few years before the invention of spinning by machinery, the annual receipts for dock dues were	} £2,330
And in the year 1865-66, the annual receipts from dock and harbour dues were	} £716,754

We have another striking exemplification of the extent of the progress made, in a return of the gross amount of assessment for income received annually from realised property and profits on trade, as they have been assessed to property and income tax, under the schedules A and D, relating to the county of Lancaster for the years 1814 and 1864, respectively. In Lancashire the gross increase of income during this period under schedules A and D has been in the ratio of 570 per cent; whilst in England and Wales, for the same years, the increase has been only in the ratio of 228 per cent:—

LANCASHIRE.					
Schedule A	{	Represents income from lands, messuages, tithes, manors, fines, quarries, mines, ironworks, fish- eries, canals, railways, gasworks, and other property - - -	1814.	1864.	Ratio of increase. in 50 years.
			£3,138,857	£13,273,056 = 422 per cent.	
Schedule D	{	Represents profits on trade, professions, em- ployments &c. - - -	1814.	1864.	Ratio of increase. in 50 years.
			£2,283,832	£17,720,076 = 775	„
Or under both schedules, Lancashire in 1814 - - - - -			£5,422,689; in 1864,	£30,993,132	570 „
ENGLAND AND WALES.					
Schedule A	{	Represents income from lands, messuages, tithes, manors, fines, quarries, mines, ironworks, fish- eries, canals, railways, gasworks, and other property - - -	1814.	1864.	Ratio of increase. in 50 years.
			£53,495,314	£113,445,596 = 212 per cent.	
Schedule D	{	Represents profits on trade, professions, em- ployments &c. - - -	1814.	1864.	Ratio of increase. in 50 years.
			£34,287,683	£87,307,979 = 254	„
Or under both schedules, England and Wales in 1814 - - - - -			£87,782,997; in 1864,	£200,753,575 = 228	„

In reviewing the evidence of Lancashire prosperity hereby afforded, the comparison will be rendered still more conclusive by having the two periods of 1814 and 1864 brought into more immediate contact.

For instance, in 1814 this county stood assessed under the above schedules, roundly speaking, at five and a half millions, and in 1864 at thirty-one millions sterling; or, placing the substance of these figures in another form, it may be stated that in the last fifty years the ratio of the above contributions to the imperial revenue from this one county has increased from one-sixteenth to a little less than one-sixth of the entire amount raised under these schedules of taxation in all the fifty-two counties of England and Wales.

It is not necessary to make allusion to the extent to which the landed estates of ancient families have benefited by the introduction into the county of the cotton manufactures. This increase of the wealth of the landowners has resulted principally from their having large portions of their estates withdrawn from agriculture to meet the requirements of manufacturing industry, thereby yielding to the owners an increase of value, in many instances amounting to from 10,000 to 50,000 per cent, beyond what the same land had previously been worth for mere purposes of cultivation. There are, however, nearly adjoining to such localities, other townships and places in which the improved value has been very slight, owing, it may be, in part to less favourable local conditions, or to the absence of genius or enterprise on the part of the inhabitants in applying them. But talent and energy often lie in a dormant state until some favourable opportunity occurs for their manifestation; and though many instances illustrative of this general law might be given, the following, based upon authentic records, relating to the ancient chase or forest of Rossendale will be sufficient.

In the reign of Henry VII. the inhabitants of Rossendale consisted of eighty souls, chiefly foresters, or keepers of the deer. Being dissatisfied with their occupation, they petitioned that monarch, "that the deer might be taken away, in order that the land of the forest might come to some good purpose, and that the commonwealth might be increased thereby." The district was accordingly disforested, and 15,300 acres of land apportioned as booths or vaccaries, upon an annual rent of £122. 13s. 8d., as settled by James I. But the foresters did not long remain satisfied with the cultivation of a sterile soil, and upon the introduction of the woollen manufacture into the North of England, they entered into that branch of industry with avidity. They were subsequently not slow in seizing the very promising advantages held out by the cotton manufacture, and they are still carrying on a very large extent of business in both these employments. In order to show that the promise held out by their predecessors, of "good purpose," has been most amply fulfilled, it may be stated that the original rental of the forest,

which was £122. 13s. 8d., has grown, according to the present county valuation, to £135,273; and the eighty souls, which formed its whole population, have increased to 45,606. It would be unjust to the working people of Rossendale and its immediate vicinity if we omitted to state that, within a very few years, they have established on the co-operative principle eighteen cotton factories, having upwards of 8,000 shareholders, with a capital of £400,000 already expended; and that on the same principle they have founded nine other establishments, for the sale of provisions, drapery goods, and other articles of domestic consumption. This extension, more especially in recent times, of the principle of co-operation into other portions of the manufacturing districts, is a development of great interest and importance.

In his work on "The Facts of the Cotton Famine," Dr. Watts states that, "at the end of 1863, there were in the cotton districts about fifty of these manufacturing companies whose nominal capital amounted to about £2,000,000, a large proportion of the shares in which had been subscribed by working men."

The cotton manufacture is no longer confined within the limits of the county of Lancaster, as at its commencement: it is now extensively carried on in parts of Yorkshire, in Cheshire, Derbyshire, Lanarkshire, and to some small extent in Ireland and in Wales. Lancashire is, however, still pre-eminently distinguished as the home of the cotton trade, and retains a sort of monopoly in the extent of its productive power.

According to a parliamentary return in 1862, Lancashire possessed nearly 80 per cent of the total number of factories in England and Wales.

	ENGLAND AND WALES.		LANCASHIRE.	
Number of factories	-	2,715	1,979 or 72 per cent.
Do. of spindles	-	28,352,125	21,530,532 ,, 75 ,,
Do. of power-looms	-	368,125	306,423 ,, 83 ,,
Do. of hands directly employed	407,598	315,620	,, 77 ,,

Nearly half a million of persons are thus directly occupied in this single industry, but to these must be added engineers, builders, machinists, bleachers, printers, and other auxiliaries. Since, however, the number of hands actually employed appears

comparatively small for the results produced, it will be necessary to bear in mind that the greatest operators are the machinery and the steam-engine. Other estimates show that the entire number of persons directly employed in, or indirectly dependent upon, the cotton trade, is about four millions, or as much as twenty per cent of the population of England and Wales. The importance of the cotton manufacture, in its individual character and in a national point of view, can only be estimated by comparing it with the various other branches of industry; and, in order to do this with accuracy, it will be necessary to go back to the year 1860, during the normal state of our cotton industry, anterior to its disturbed condition by the American War. By reference to the Board of Trade tables of the exports of British and Irish produce and manufacture, we find that upwards of forty per cent of the total exports of the country consisted, at that date, of cotton goods exclusively, the three other textile branches having contributed twenty per cent, whilst the remaining forty per cent consisted of all the other articles of commerce exported from this country.

EXPORTS.

Textile—Cotton Branch :

Exports of cotton goods, yarns, hosiery, and lace	£52,012,000	
Add to the above the proportion of two-thirds the value of haberdashery and slops	- - -	4,108,000
		<hr/> 56,120,000

Textile—Other Branches :

Woollen goods, hosiery, and yarn	- - -	16,000,000
Linen goods, lace, thread, and yarn	- - -	6,606,000
Silk goods, thrown silk, and yarn	- - -	2,413,000
Add the proportion of one-third of haberdashery and slops	- - - - -	2,054,000
		<hr/> 27,073,000

Various Manufactures :

Beer, books, cabinet works, candles, cordage, earthenware, glass, plate, leather, oil, paint, soap, soda, spirits, stationery, sugar, &c., &c.	12,158,000
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Natural and Wrought-up Products :

Coals, copper, hardware, iron, lead, tin, salt, steam engines, millwork, machinery, &c. &c.	29,000,000
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Natural Products and various other articles :

Butter, cheese, wood, fish, pickles, and many other articles not enumerated	- - -	11,540,000
		<hr/> 52,698,000

Total value of exports of all kinds in 1860	- -	£135,891,000
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It will be observed from this statement how large has been the contribution of the cotton manufacture to the entire sum of our exports, and how marked must be the effect of its influence on the commercial prosperity of the kingdom.

This advanced progress has not, indeed, been either rapid or constant. Ere the cotton trade attained to its present magnitude it has had to encounter many bitter and costly obstructions, some avoidable and some unavoidable; but all of which, as lessons of experience, well deserve to be recorded. During the continental war, which terminated in 1815, the raw material was dear, in consequence of the risk of capture at sea, and of its taxation at our ports; whilst there was also an excise duty imposed on an important branch of the manufacture. The goods exported were not only exposed to maritime capture, but were everywhere obstructed by fiscal duties, which in many cases resulted in their entire exclusion from the market. Fortunately, our manufacturers, though much hampered by these difficulties, were not daunted or unduly discouraged by their ill-success, but they sought a remedy for all such evils in the use of improved machinery and of new processes, calculated to economise the cost of production. In 1815, after the close of the war, the annual exports of cotton manufactures had reached the sum of £18,158,172, and it was hoped that peace would restore our wonted prosperity, but this hope was not realised. The European markets were opened, but the resources of the people in foreign countries had been much wasted, and they could ill afford any expenditure in the purchase of articles of comfort or luxury.

Our commercial legislation, based as it was upon erroneous economic principles, imposed most injurious restrictions on trade and manufactures. In the vain attempt to promote agricultural prosperity by artificial means, the resources of the people were materially crippled. Under a prohibitory corn law and a restrictive tariff, foreign trade was paralysed; for the less we imported the less we exported; navigation was depressed, food was dear, employment was scarce, and profits were reduced to the minimum; hence impatience and discontent largely prevailed. For upwards of a quarter of a century this suicidal policy was

persisted in ; resulting, as regards the cotton manufacture, in a reduction in the value of the exports from £18,158,172 in 1815 to £13,907,884 in 1842, notwithstanding the fact that increased cheapness had caused a very considerable increase of the quantity of goods produced and exported.

The pernicious effect of this legislation was not confined to cotton ; the entire commerce of the kingdom was paralysed. In 1815 the exports of all descriptions amounted to £49,653,245, and in 1842, after twenty-seven years of peace, they amounted only to £47,284,988, being a decrease of two and a quarter millions of pounds sterling, instead of a large increase.

Fortunately, about this time, it became apparent to many that no attainable amount of mechanical skill, no economy however rigid, could cope successfully with the obstacles involved in such a system of commercial restriction.

There was a largely-increasing population and a growing impatience everywhere manifested itself, leading to the conviction that the protective system was as injurious to the economical progress of the whole country as it was unjust in its bearing on particular classes of the people.

Political economists, who had hitherto been deemed theorists only, were now listened to with deep and earnest attention, and in various parts of the country men of considerable intelligence and strong will became deeply impressed, and at length practically influenced by their teaching. The result was that many affluent and influential men, who had never yet engaged in public matters, united themselves in an organisation to overthrow the baneful policy of protection, and to establish free trade, as the essential embodiment of a wholesome competition.

The league of free traders was thus formed. Being very popular, it soon became possessed of ample funds, raised by voluntary contributions, to enable them to disseminate sound views upon the subject : and it was not long ere, by their distribution of printed publications and by powerful and eloquent appeals to the understanding, the public mind became prepared for the adoption by the legislature of an enlightened commercial policy.

At length, after years of peaceful and energetic agitation, their

labours were crowned with success, and the beneficial results realised have far exceeded the highest anticipations of the most sagacious and far-seeing leaders of the movement.

Under our new commercial system, the total exports of British produce and manufactures since 1842 have increased 250 per cent, and there has been a similar increase in the quantity of raw cotton imported. In the export of piece goods and yarn there has been an increase from 24 millions in 1840 to 57 millions in 1865.

EXPORTS OF BRITISH PRODUCE AND MANUFACTURES.

In 1842 (during the existence of protection) the exports of	}	£47,381,023
British produce and manufactures amounted to - -		
In 1865, under a free trade policy, during most of the	}	£165,862,402
twenty-three years, they amounted to - - - -		
Or an increase of 350 per cent.		

IMPORTS OF RAW COTTON.

	Years.		lbs.
The quantity imported in	1840	- -	592,488,010
„ „	1845	- -	721,979,953
„ „	1850	- -	663,576,851
„ „	1855	- -	891,751,952
„ „	1860	- -	1,390,938,752

EXPORTS OF COTTON MANUFACTURES.

	Years.		Piece Goods.	Yarns.	Total.
Exports in	1840	- -	£17,567,310	£7,101,308	£24,668,618
„	1845	- -	19,156,096	6,963,235	26,119,331
„	1850	- -	21,873,697	6,383,904	28,257,601
„	1855	- -	27,578,746	7,200,395	34,779,141
„	1860	- -	42,141,505	9,870,875	52,012,380
„	1865	- -	46,903,796	10,351,049	57,254,845

The conclusions to be drawn from these statements not only confirm the most ardent anticipations of the free-traders, but they serve also to substantiate the remark of the late Mr. Senior, “that our cotton manufacture is one of the pillars of our national wealth.” “If figures can ever be magnificent—if naked totals ever reach the sublime, surely the cotton trade of 1860 claims our admiration.”*

But this year of magnificent totals was unfortunately followed by immense losses, arising from our having depended too largely upon the United States for the supply of our raw material, and hence the cotton famine, which has resulted from the civil war in that country.

* Arnold’s “History of the Cotton Famine.”

The trade was suddenly diminished by one half, and for more than three years employers and employed suffered together, and seemed likely to become involved in one common ruin. Mills and loomsheds in every direction were reduced to silence, large capitalists lost immense sums of money, and small employers were brought to poverty, whilst half a million of their operatives and dependants had to subsist on public subscriptions, and upon parish allowances.

Messrs. Ellison and Haywood, in their Cotton Circular for January, 1866, set forth the money losses as from 65 to 70 millions.

Loss of interest of capital and profit to employers	- £37,000,000 to £40,000,000
Loss of wages to operatives, &c.	- - - £28,000,000 to £30,000,000
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£65,000,000 to £70,000,000	

and Dr. Watts, in "The Facts of the Cotton Famine," founding his estimate on the statistics of 1861, as prepared by Mr. Bazley, M.P., confirms this estimate.

Employers' losses, three years, at	- - - £9,500,000 per annum,	£28,500,000
Workpeople's losses	- - - £11,000,000	do. £33,000,000
Shopkeepers' losses, on wages at 10 per cent	- - -	£3,300,000
Do. do. on half employers' profits	- - -	£1,425,000
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Total loss on three years	-	£66,225,000

It is difficult, in the retrospect of such a calamity, to know which most to admire—the fortitude of a population rendered suddenly as helpless as if stricken with paralysis, and reduced to a subsistence on charity at less than one-third of their ordinary income, and yet strenuously maintaining an attitude of neutrality between the combatants who caused their distress; or the magnificent benevolence of the public who promptly contributed nearly one-and-a-half millions sterling to relieve their sufferings. But whether we look to the patient endurance of the operatives who subsisted upon relief, or the manly exertions of the large proportion (fully one-third of those out of employ), who managed to provide for themselves; whether we regard the liberal support of the general public, or the handsome conduct of the bulk of the employers, we find in all an equally satisfactory testimony to the character of the country, and especially of the county in which we dwell.

Taking our leave of this cloudy chapter of our history, let us now briefly turn our attention to the evidences around us of the beneficial influence of this great branch of manufacturing industry. What changes have been effected by it in the country at large and in the district in which we live ! The forests have been cleared, the rivers bridged, lines of roads, railroads, and canals have been formed, the valleys have become crowded with manufacturing works, the quiet little market towns and country villages have been enlarged to enormous proportions, the residences of the wealthy, as they lie scattered about, adorn the landscape, and the ancient town of Manchester is now a populous city, the metropolis of British industry, and a central authority in all commercial questions.

As an appendage to the narrative of this great exhibition of national progress, accomplished, as we have shown, in the face of all but insuperable difficulties, not a few may be curious to learn what were the available resources of the district, and whether there has been anything remarkable in the principal characteristics of the people who have been instrumental in effecting such marvellous results. In justice to them, we must say that they derived but slight aid from the wealthy or from the proprietary class. The progress they have achieved must be almost entirely attributed to the indefatigable assiduity of a race of men whose distinguishing feature was the inheritance of stirring and inflexible qualities derived from their Saxon population of Lancashire ancestry.

The inhabitants of Lancashire appear to have shared largely in these qualities. They have been described by Hugh Oldham, Bishop of Exeter, the founder of the Manchester Grammar School, and a native of the town whose name he bore, as well as by other observant persons, as "possessed of pregnant wits;" distinguished for "the quiet dignity of their minds ; . . . roused only by great objects ; . . . above petty bustle ; . . . having a contempt for show ; . . . an abhorrence of intrigue ; . . . plainness and downrightness in their deportment, . . . and unostentatious good nature."

It will be apparent that during the last century they have manifested great energy of character, and by a well-

directed enterprise, have pursued with remarkable success the practical application of mechanics and chemistry to the service of manufactures and commerce. Deficient, it may be, in general information, they have certainly possessed no small share of practical sagacity; and their careful study and close application to business pursuits have enabled them to acquire a considerable influence in the affairs of the country.

To a rural population, the change, in the first instance, from the open-air labour of the farm to the complicated toil of manufacture must have been very arduous, and a severe exercise of mind must also have been required in attaining a knowledge of the varied details of their new employment; but it was by such exercise and training that they became better fitted for the higher avocations of life.

Education has, moreover, greatly elevated them, and the introduction of Sunday schools has been the happy means of initiating an extent of educational, moral, and religious advancement which has proved of inestimable value. In recent times the enlightened benevolence of the more wealthy has been directed to the establishing of day schools, which, together with the legislative provision of factory schools, has tended greatly to increase the intelligence and to ameliorate the character and manners of the working classes.

A large number of mechanics' institutions, working men's clubs and colleges, free libraries, and other similar organisations, which afford the means of mental culture at a cheap rate, have been established. They are much resorted to, and highly appreciated by the operative class. Having the ability to read, the press has become powerful as an educator, and upon five days in the week the daily circulation of the Manchester newspapers is upwards of 70,000 copies, and on Saturdays 130,000 copies, in addition to the circulation of the London and other provincial journals.

There is much earnestness among the people in acquiring political intelligence—ever the sure forerunner of constitutional freedom. Nor is this even now without appreciable results. The wisdom evinced in their acquiescence in our neutral policy during the late American war, and the patient endurance of the

half million of people who were thereby for a time reduced to a state of indigence, were indubitable evidences of more accurate knowledge and clearer political instincts. Frugality and prudence are apparent in the desire of many to attain the possession of such resources as would place them beyond the fear of actual want, or lead to superior wealth. It is gratifying also to observe the establishment among them of co-operative societies and manufacturing and commercial companies, raised out of the reserved funds of the people, and conducted exclusively by the ablest and most trustworthy of their members.

It will be admitted that vigorous and rapid strides have been made in all the other branches of productive industry in the country. Nor is this to be wondered at, seeing that within the limited range of our islands we possess so largely all those elements which favour the pursuits of a manufacturing and commercial people. Our ports, harbours, rivers, and other means of internal and external intercourse are altogether favourable to the extension of commerce. Our mineral wealth of every kind is abundant. The temperature of our climate is adapted to continuous labour. Our people have been gifted with an unusual amount of sagacity and power of application; and, having been favoured with such treasured resources, it is gratifying to reflect that we have succeeded in the husbanding of them for the productive purposes of commerce to an extent far beyond our own requirements: we have thus had the command of exchange for an untold abundance of foreign productions, to provide for our necessities and greatly to enlarge our comforts.

In conclusion, we may remark, that in this rapid sketch of our cotton industry we have endeavoured to show in what manner the genius of our people has been exercised whilst disclosing and rendering productive the capabilities of that apparently ungenial district of little more than a century ago. It will be apparent that these gigantic results have been derived from a succession of well-directed and persistent efforts, such as are calculated to excite both our wonder and our admiration.

It is not within our province to determine what constitutes true heroism, but it will be admitted, that in providing so largely for the comfort and happiness of man, by bringing into subjec-

tion the forces of nature, this quality has been manifested in a very powerful manner and to no inconsiderable extent.

We may well, therefore, cherish, in honoured remembrance, the names of those who have established upon our soil this wonderful organisation, whereby Lancashire has been so enormously benefited, the wealth of the United Kingdom so materially increased, and the reputation of our country, throughout the civilised world, so greatly exalted.